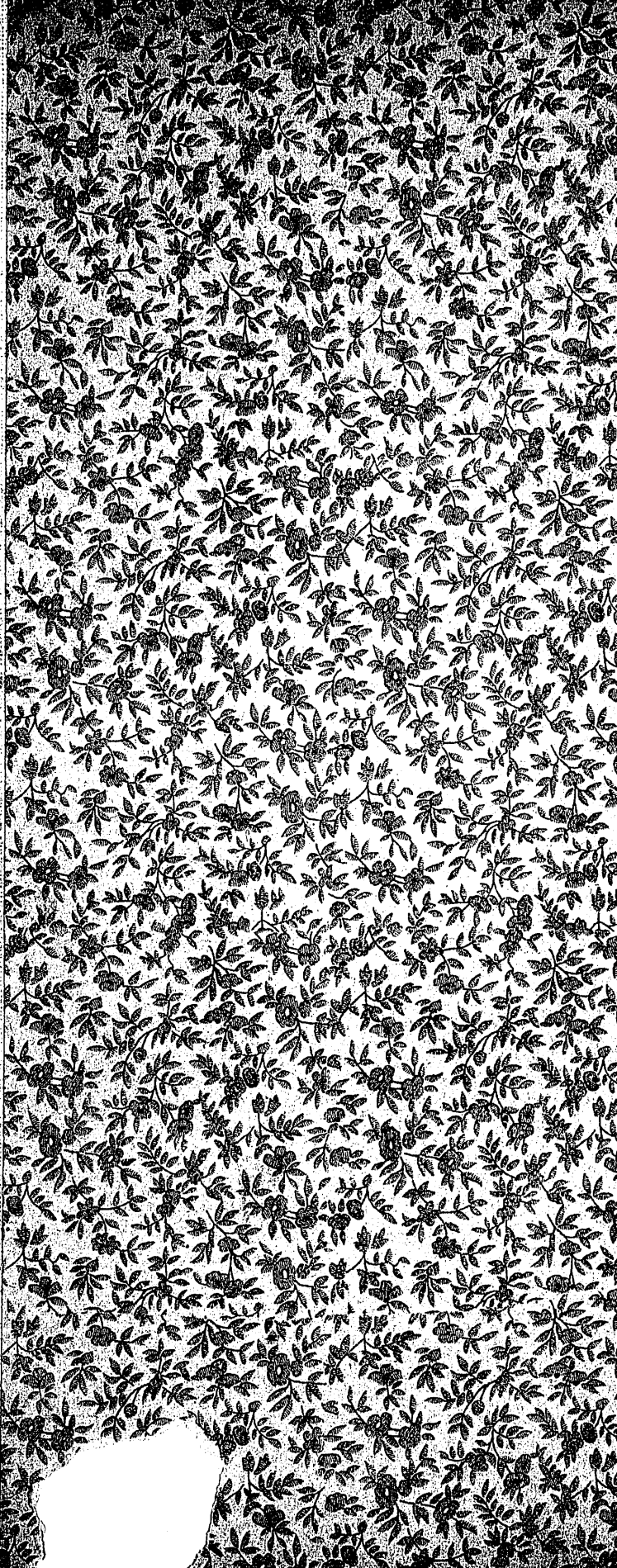






Gen. Lib.



St. Francis, of Assisi;

His Life and Times.

A Graduating Thesis for the Degree of

B. D.

Department of Semitics.

By

Edwin Bruce Kinney,

The University of Chicago

March 1897.

July.

TO
RABBI COACH

12X4700
- F6K5

Bibliography.

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Mrs. Oliphant- | "St. Francis of Assisi." |
| 11 | Paul Sabatier- | "St. Francis of Assisi." |
| 111 | Butler- | "Lives of the Saints." |
| 1V | Lea, H. C.- | "A History of the Inquisition." |

Francis of Assisi; His Life and Times.

It is neither possible nor desirable, within the narrow limits of this paper, to trace back to their sources all the influences which led to the establishment of the mendicant orders. Suffice it to say that far back in the asceticism of the third century, we may find the germs of what, in after years, developed into the different monastic orders. But up to the twelfth century, of which we shall speak, there had been no order that, properly, could be termed mendicant. Of the friars, then in existence, the Benedictines, who took their rise in the fifth century, were the most numerous as well as the most typical. These orders drew to themselves those of all ranks who, tired of the mad whirl of society, alarmed by their own debauchery or disgusted with the sin and corruption about them, withdrew from sight and contact of all these things to the quieter and simpler life of a monk. Thereafter they spent their time in the abbey cell in prayer or in making copies of the sacred parchments. If not scholastically inclined, they were given manual labor about the abbey. But the developements of the twelfth century were destined to change in a very large degree the previous order of things.

Within the church a terrible state of affairs existed. Priests seemed totally to have forgotten their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The priest who was not rich, avaricious, licentious and independent of all authority, was exceedingly rare amid what seemed to be a seething mass of corruption. It is easy to put words together filled with loathsome and disgusting charges and apply them to the church of that day; but it is not easy, in the blaze of this nineteenth century of moral and religious developement, despite needed reforms, to conceive the then existing.

conditions. The worst phases of modern religious life entirely fail to picture the church of that day.

Because of these things numerous heresies sprang up. Men desired a holy life. They saw that if they entered into a monastery they would lose the opportunity of winning others to a holier life. They realized that the cloistered monk, separated from the world, could not be an active agent of reform. The salt, to purify and preserve, must come in contact with the putrefaction. With this idea uppermost in his mind Peter Waldo started out to reform the church. He had no thought of antagonizing the existing organization; only the corruption of that organization. But in spite of himself he outgrew his original purpose and found it necessary to break with the Roman Church or be broken in it. Similar motives to this inspired the Cathari and Albigenses. All these movements became strong and well developed heresies---made stronger by the fact that they were missionary movements which sent their followers all over Europe preaching the doctrines which they held dear.

What could be done to stay the onward march of these heresies which were making such fearful inroads into the strength and influence of the Roman Church? Seemingly the first real solution of this problem occurred to the minds of the more obscure members of the clergy rather than to those high in official position.

Foulques de Neuilly, an obscure priest, was the first to conceive the idea of fighting the heretical missionary fire by a like fire, though burning in the breasts of those obedient to the church. Innocent III. gave him license to preach. Just as he was gaining great influence over the people, the pope changed

the channel of his activity by sending him, in 1198, an urgent request to preach the crusade. He complied so successfully that two hundred thousand pilgrims were enlisted by his appeals. He died, however, in 1202 before he could return to his original work.

Next, in the early part of the thirteenth century, we find the idea of a mendicant order still further developed in the *Pauperes Catholici* founded by Duran. Duran had been a Waldensian but in a great disputation, (1207) held in the presence of the Count of Foix, he was reclaimed, it is said by the eloquence of Dominic. He at once began to organize a missionary band with the special object of winning back the Waldenses to the church. The order grew rapidly and soon communities were planted from Spain to Italy. Poverty and chastity were its cardinal principles. Innocent gave them his sanction provided only that they remain subject to the prelates within whose jurisdiction they operated. Soon quarrels sprang up relative to the reconciliation of heretics to the church. And in spite of the influence and even the commands of Innocent they were lost to view in the excitement incident to the crusade. After scarce half a dozen years we find no trace of them.

The first mendicant order which was to be permanent awaited the quickening touch of St. Dominic. He was born in Caleruega, Castile, in 1170 and received a thorough theological training of ten years duration in the University of Palencia. He advanced rapidly and was chosen as sole companion by Bishop Diego in his evangelizing tours. On his very first trip he lodged in a heretic's house in Toulouse and after a whole night of labor converted him. This victory determined the course of his life and when his bishop returned to Spain to die, Dominic remained in Languedoc to win the

heretics back to the church. After years of labor the pope sanctioned his scheme of evangelization and then the order grew apace. Poverty was no part of his original plan for we find Foulques the bishop of Toulouse giving him a sixth part of his revenue and soon large donations of the churches and other property were made to them. Four years after Dominic and his sixteen disciples received the popes full sanction, they had sixty convents and, in 1276, Peter of Tarentaise, a Dominican monk, ascended the papal throne as Innocent V. This, in great brevity, is the story of the origin and early developement of the order which was destined to produce the famous Jacobins of Paris, the renowned scholastic philosophers of all Europe, the infamous Inquisitions of Spain and Italy and to give to the church no fewer than eight hundred bishops, one hundred and fifty archbishops, sixty cardinals and four popes.

Nearly contemporary with this movement in western Europe, there was being evolved in Italy an order which was to become no less powerful and influential than that founded by Dominic. These two movements, originating independently of each other, were in some particulars cooperative while in others there was a sharp rivalry.

There is today in the province of Perugia, Italy, a city of about six thousand inhabitants called Assisi. The principle source of revenue to the people is caring for the wants of the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who annually visit the church and tomb of St. Francis who first saw the light of day at this place. The city of today gives a good idea of what it was in the time of Francis, except that the commanding feudal castle of other days is in ruins. Its anciently built houses still stand in terraces along the hillsides.

In the latter part of the twelfth century there lived in Assisi a wealthy cloth merchant, Pietro Bernardone by name. The men of his class were important personages. It required great wealth to manage such a business. Great expeditions were necessary involving a great outlay for a protecting retinue in the long purchasing journeys. In the absence of newspapers the merchants, like the commercial traveler of the present day, only much more so, became veritable newsmongers. The new thoughts and ideas of one country, they conveyed to another. Unlike these days, religion was an absorbing topic of conversation; so the merchant became a ~~dealer in~~ purveyor of religious thought and even of heresy.

While Bernardone was absent on one of his expeditions to France, in 1182, there was born to him a son whom the mother had baptised John. Now Bernardone had always greatly admired France and her people; so upon his return he called the boy Francis. Pica, the mother, was a sweet spirited little woman of gentle birth; for in official documents we find the title "Domina" given her. Little Francis played with the other children of Assisi upon the open squares and listened to the marvelous stories which his father told of other countries, their commerce and religion. Who can say but that Bernardone thus early sowed seeds of religious fervor which, like a smouldring fire for many years, should one day burst forth with all the force of religious enthusiasm. —

Of the education of Francis we know little; probably there is little to know. The priests of San Giorgio were intrusted with his instruction. There he learned some Latin and probably little else. Possibly the most important part of his education was received from his father who taught him French and probably took him on some of his journeys. — 2

The rest of his education- if we may call it such- was acquired on the streets of Assisi. If we are to believe the reports that come to us, even the children of those days went to such lengths of vice as would shock a hardened sinner of the present time. As he grew somewhat above childhood he began to associate with the children of the nobility of Assisi who were very willing to enter into partnership with him, matching their gentle birth against his purse, thus making a good stock in trade. Bernardone was glad to see his favorite son leading the scions of noble houses, if it be in excesses, it was nevertheless leading them. He also was willing to pay the price it costs from his hoards of gold. Francis, given free rein and having the idea which so many young men of to-day have, that debauchery is the fundamental prerequisite to success went from excess to still greater excess. He prided himself on his wasteful expenditure of money and on the fact that he could and did go to greater extremes of vice than any of his companions. His father encouraged him in all this and with a modest compliment to himself would say: "Ah, he is the child of a prince." The gentle Pica mourned over her reckless son; but with that faith, that only mother can have in their children, would reply: "Yes; but he will one day be a child of God." Even the father became anxious and angry when Francis came to neglect his customers for his vile companions.

But a change was coming. Influences were already struggling in his being for the mastery over sin. In spite of his excesses his was a generous nature. Indeed one could not go to the lengths that he did without possessing certain elements of generosity. Frequently he would give to some beggar all the money he had and even divest himself of clothing for his benefit.

One day a man asked an alms of him in the name of God. Francis sharply drove him away but soon asked himself: "What would I not have done had he asked in the name of some great count or baron? How much more ought I to do in the name of God!" Leaving his customer he followed the beggar and overwhelmed him with gifts.

In the unsettled condition of political affairs in 1202 a war broke out between Perugia and Assisi in which the Assisians were defeated and Francis, with others, was taken prisoner. This captivity, which lasted for one year, afforded much time for reflection. On his return to Assisi, however, he celebrated his freedom with such a whirl of dissipation that he fell seriously ill. For weeks the messenger of death hovered near but he convalesced and had still more time for meditation. During a walk in the beautiful country about Assisi nature's purity seemed to reproach him for his despicable past and he was overwhelmed with grief. He knew not how to rid himself of his bitter memories. At last an opportunity seemingly came. It was to go to war with a knight of Assisi. He fitted himself out with great gorgeousness but he got no farther than Spoleto where for some unknown reason he gave away his outfit and returned at once to Assisi. He continued his country walks; sometimes with a single companion, more often alone. He found a grotto near Assisi which became the Gethsemane where he fought out in protracted struggles the battle of his soul. His friends sought to lure him back to his old life. At length he gave a sumptuous feast. The guests crowned Francis "King of Revelry," but he was quiet and reserved. Finally one said: "He is thinking of taking a wife." Francis replied: "Yes I am thinking of taking a wife more beautiful, more rich, more pure than you could ever imagine." Little they suspected the victory that was

being wrought out in his soul.

At times he spent long weary nights shedding tears of bitter anguish. Remorse crushed his life and desire. He wanted what the soul so often longs for- peace, peace. He went to Rome and gave the contents of his purse to the fund of St Peter. To enter into full sympathy with the poor, he exchanged garments with a beggar and all day long asked alms of the passers-by. Could he endure poverty and reproach? He thought he could. A test came. He was riding his horse one day and suddenly came upon a leper. Instinctively he turned away. Reproaching himself he went back, gave the leper all the money he had and kneeling down kissed his hand as he would have done to a priest. Surely this debauchee was changing. All this however did not give him the desired peace. He knew what he wanted but not where to find it. Nor did he know of anyone who could tell him where to find it. Should he enter the church? What relief would that offer when he knew that every official in the Roman church had a price? When there was no crime against God or man that was not common among the clergy? When the pope plundered the cardinals, cardinals the bishop, bishops the priests, and priests the people? when all ranks of the clergy stopped at absolutely nothing to gain wealth and provide for their mistresses and bastards? The monks were little better. They kept wine shops under the very shadow of the monastery and some even kept courtesans to attract custom. Francis was not a hypocrite; his was an intense nature. He spent long hours and even days and nights in prayer.

Upon one of the hills of Assisi there was a neglected chapel called St. Damian. The poor half starved priest was almost the only worshipper who ever entered it until Francis was attracted to it. The image of the crucifix charmed him because it had a

look of joy and not of pain. It seemed to respond to the prayers of Francis. He was so wrought upon that he sold his horse and all the he could call his own, left his home and begged the priest to let him stay there. When Bernardone learned what Francis had done he flew into a passion and with a party of friends went to St. Damian to take Francis by force. Francis concealed himself and thus escaped his father's wrath. Long he implored God for guidance. He longed for the quiet meditation of the monastery. He wanted to be free from the world and its temptations. No doubt this desire comes to most Christians at times of depression at the prevalence of sin. Peter wanted to stay on the Mount of Transfiguration but Christ taught him that there were devils to cast out in the valley beneath where other men lived. So solitude wooed Francis; but when he took a broad view of the world and its needs, service won him. He knew that his life spent in seclusion would make no other life better if it did his own. His heart burned to make the world better and to do this he must come in touch with the world. He would tell his father of his resolve. On his way children took him for a madman. His father scarcely recognized him and when he did was so enraged that he nearly killed him and left him bound in the house. When neither his cruelty nor Pica's gentleness availed to win Francis back his mother liberated him and he returned to St. Damian. Bernardone had him summoned before the bishop that he might have him expelled from Assisi. In the presence of a great throng Francis renounced his father, gave back what money he still had and even stripped off all his clothing and returned it to him. This dramatic scene had a wonderful effect upon the people and the sentiment was all in favor of Francis for they despised Bernardone.

Francis now resolved to restore St. Damian. By his singing upon the streets he gathered crowds and told them his plan. The people gave so liberally that early in 1200 the work was finished; but not until Francis had toiled many weeks as a common laborer, carrying stones and mortar. Other chapels were rebuilt, most important of which was the Santa Maria or Portiuncula, which is to this day the shrine toward which the heart of every Franciscan turns.

Francis, even yet, had no conception what phase of service was to be his life work. He was zealous to serve God; but how? in what way? One day a Benedictine from Mt. Subasia came to say mass at the Portiuncula. He read these words: "Wherever ye go preach saying the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither silver nor gold nor brass in your purses, neither scrip nor two coats, nor shoes nor staff, for the laborer is worthy of his meat." This was the supreme moment of his life; for it the past years had been preparing him. The call of God had come to him; he would take these words as the literal rule of his life. For Francis to resolve, was to do. The very next day he left his all, as the scripture directed, and went to preach in the streets of Assisi. Men knew him and the story of his changed life and could not but be influenced by his impassioned utterances. The rich and prominent Bernardus di Quintavalle became attached to him. He was willing to sell all that he had and give to the poor. Now for the first Francis conceived the idea of gathering a few congenial spirits about him. Soon they came faster than he could care for or direct them. Francis and his followers went up and down Umbria helping the peasants in the hayfield for lodging and bread but every-

where preaching the Gospel of Christ.

Francis wanted the pope's approval; so with eleven companions he went to Rome. To their great surprise they found the bishop of Assisi there who introduced them to Cardinal Giovanni di San Paolo who, after much questioning, introduced Francis to Innocent III. They were exorted to join some of the existing orders but Francis would not. Finally Giovanni was instructed to confer upon them the tonsure. The origin of this movement was almost anti-monastic and now almost before he realized it Francis was a monk of the Roman Church. Francis and his companions now returned to Assisi and took quarters in a deserted leper hospital called Rivo-Torto.

When the Assisians learned that one from their own city had formed an order with the sanction of the pope their enthusiasm knew no bounds. Only the cathedral could hold the crowds that wished to hear him. When they had heard him their enthusiasm was even greater than before. A veritable Elijah or a John the Baptist had come preaching-"Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The rich felt his home thrusts, they knew the shallowness of their own lives and they felt a contrast, unfavorable to themselves when they stood in his presence. They knew he lived what he preached. The poor knew from experience that he was their friend. They could find in him love and sympathy and heart. In him again was fulfilled the saying-"The common people heard him gladly." And the people will hear the man, who, like Francis, has a gospel that he believes and that he lives and dares to proclaim in spite of opposition. There was a great contrast, which the people appreciated, between the dry, scholastic, subtle, dogmatic dissertations of the prelates and the clear practical, incisive words of Francis which carried with them an obvious meaning and

deep conviction.

One day a peasant rudely drove them out of the Rivo-Forto but the abbot of the Benedictines on Mt. Subasia came to the rescue with the gift of the Portiuncula. Great success attended the labors of the Brothers Minor, for so they had been officially named. But success is often fraught with the gravest dangers. The Franciscans were no exception to this rule. The order had become too large to be a unit. Again, success brings to any organization those attracted by the hope of personal aggrandizement or gratification. Signs of dissatisfaction began to appear. Some preferred idleness to activity and to live off the labors of others. The Franciscans are called mendicants; but Francis organized an order of laboring monks. Each man was to follow his own trade and if he had none was to learn one. Men who had lived in luxury and affluence performed the most menial services; they buried the dead, cared for lepers, washed their sores, and in short did anything and everything to relieve the poor and support their own brotherhood. Time forbids to speak of the many noble men Francis gathered into his order and of their many deeds of kindness love and mercy which, in the midnight sky of the thirteenth century, shine out like veritable stars.

Nor can we more than mention the missionary journeys of Francis. He covered Italy completely and attempted to go to the Saracens but was hindered by shipwreck. He went to Spain and Morocco and preached to the Moors. Of the success of these journeys we know little. But we do know that wherever he went in Europe he won numbers to his order.

There is another danger which always follows success- that is the jealousy of those not in line with the movement.

1014

1014

The prelates feared the growing influence of Francis would rob them of their power. They sought to get Francis under their control and advised him to accept "privileges" from the pope but he saw the danger and avoided it. Other orders had sought these privileges which in the end proved their destruction. Heretofore the pope had merely tolerated Francis and his order; now it had grown to be a great power and he desired to direct its energies to his own ends. The pope sought to change the rule of the order. A protracted struggle followed and Francis finally was forced to yield but still protesting. Francis was asked to preach before the pope and finally consented. He forgot his carefully prepared speech but by a perfect tempest of inspired oratory completely won all who heard him.

St. Dominic was in Rome at this time and sought to unite his order with the Franciscans but Francis would not listen to it. Dominic's followers numbered but a few score and he was at a loss to account for the more rapid growth of the Brothers Minor. At length he concluded that it was their rule of poverty and adopted it into his own order and set a most rigid example himself.

In the meantime the Franciscans had been in nearly every country of Europe in missionary work. In many places they were misunderstood, either ignorantly or purposely and subjected to the most horrible barbarities. They returned to Francis and complained of their treatment. The Holy See used this as an argument to compel Francis to accept privileges and thereby secure protection.

In 1219 Francis and eleven others accompanied the crusaders to Egypt where he preached before the Sultan. He also offered to make a test of religion by walking through a fire with a follower of Mahomet. Thence he went to Syria and Palestine where he spent several months concerning which little can be ascertained.

During this absence the pope used every possible influence to gain secure control of his order. In this he was aided by some of Francis' most trusted lieutenants, who were dissatisfied with the prevailing rule. Messengers were dispatched to Francis who returned at once. Cardinal Ugalini, a tool of the pope, took Francis to a quiet retreat for needed rest. Here he insinuated himself into Francis' favor by declaring that he was his best friend and finally reproved him for his obstinacy to the pope. Sick at heart and discouraged Francis drew up a new rule in accordance with the demands of the vatican. This new rule struck at the very root of Francis' cherished principle of poverty. He resigned and appointed Pietro di Cantana to be leader of the order. Francis founded an order obedient to God and conscience; it now became obedient only to the pope. The rule of 1210 was wholly Franciscan, that of 1221 a compromise; while the rule of 1223 was wholly papal. True, the new rules increased the numbers and influence of the order; but Francis well knew that this success was a source of danger. Comparatively few could do the work for which they were organized and could be kept wholesome and united much more easily.

A papal bull issued in 1222 gave authority to the Franciscans to celebrate the sacraments in their own churches if they came to have any. They had none but the pope intended they should have. Property now came to them in perfect avalanches, thus destroying a fundamental principle of the order.

Very early in the history of the Franciscans, learned men began to enter their ranks. Francis had no objections to this but in 1221 Pietro died and Brother Elias, a university man, was chosen minister general. Thereupon multitudes of educated men flocked to his standard. Here was still another danger. Not that Francis disbelieved in education; but he had organized his order for an

especially humble work and he foresaw that the university man, as a rule was not so well fitted for that work as another. It was not long before the Franciscans, almost oblivious to their original work, were vying with the Dominicans for the chief chairs in the universities of Europe. Once again subtle scholasticism and dogmatism was to kill the very organization provided to stand against it. It was as it would be now should college men throng the Salvation Army; they would make it impossible for the army to do the work it is doing now.

For some time Francis had been failing in health. He was taken from one place to another, by a few faithful companions, in the hope that he would recover. Everywhere he was hailed as a saint. So great was the fear of the Assisians that some other city would detain him till his death and then keep his body that they sent a detachment of soldiery to guard his advance. He finally reached the bishop's palace in Assisi where he heroically endured the barbaric surgery of his day by having white-hot irons plowed across his forehead. In accordance with his desire he was removed to ^{the} Portiuncula that he might die where Jesus appeared to him and commissioned him for his work. Here he composed his Will which gave directions for the future of the order and breathed a benediction upon all who should enter it. It is an expression of his early ideal but practically had no influence upon the order as it had become a mere machine of the vatican.

But the shadows lengthened and while his friars were singing his own songs, with no clothing upon his person, that he might go as he had lived, in utter poverty (true to his ideal to the end) he breathed his last October 3rd, 1226.

It would not do to omit all mention of the two kindred orders; the Tertiaries and the Clarises.

Early in the popularity of Francis whole towns were won over by him and wanted to join his order. Instead of admitting them he made a simple rule for their direction but it was probably not until 1221 that they were officially recognized as a part of the order. They were not to carry arms nor use force, were to live economically and use their surplus means to relieve distress and build up the Kingdom of God.

The first time Francis preached in the cathedral of Assisi there was in his audience a young girl of sixteen whose heart had been torn by the sorrows of her times. The words of Francis fired her heart; they were for her alone; she would begin a work similar to his. She told him her plans and in 1212 came to the Portuincula with two companions and took the vow and veil. She then went to the house of Benedictine nuns to await developments. The next day her father pursued her there and pleaded with her to return but she would not. This was Santa Clara who founded the order of the Clarises. For their use Francis secured St. Damian which has since been their home. Certain of Francis' friars took it upon themselves to care for the wants of the new order and were called Zealots of the Poor Ladies. For fifty years Clara lived to resist the encroachments of the papacy which sought to compel her to break her vows. She defied the power of popes and they submitted to her.

Throughout Francis' life she was a most trusted and valuable adviser. Many times he felt discouraged but inspired by her words of cheer he would again go forth to preach the everlasting gospel.

Thus far I have purposely avoided all the controversial points in the career of Francis and now can but mention them.

It is said that in 1224, after he had fasted for days and meditated upon the passion of our Lord, he received the "Stigmata" or marks of the crucifixion. This is uniformly claimed by his contemporaries, both friends and foes, except the Dominicans from whose natural rivalry it would not be expected. It was also sanctioned by a papal bull. Numerous miracles are attributed to him but of these we cannot speak.

In closing what estimate shall we put upon Francis? Whatever view we take, we must admit that he was a remarkable man. Perhaps he was ^{not} a genius but a devout man who, out of the struggles of his soul, evolved a great plan and unselfishly sought to carry it into execution. Other founders of orders had been learned men; Francis was not. Others had been sychopantic in their zeal to obey the pope that they might win from him favors and indulgencies; Francis never! He fought desperately the aggressions of the papacy upon his pure ideals. Unaided and alone he persisted in doing that, for which most men would have been excommunicated first and then burned. In spite of all this so great was the esteem in which the church held him that in less than two years after his death he was canonized by Gregory IX who came in person to Assisi to superintend the ceremonies and to lay the first stone of the new basilica and dedicated it to his honor. But what shall we say of Francis?

First of all he was a man of undoubted piety. There is abundant evidence of this. He had an unswerving faith in God and his son Jesus. He was also humble. Throughout his life he did the most menial services for the lepers. He visited the lazar houses, prepared their food, washed their sores and ate out of the same dish with them. His humility was not feigned but sincere.

There was no condescension about it. Such was the love of God in his heart that he could call every man his brother.

When he shunned wealth, marriage, learning and political power it was not because he did not believe in property, the family, education or statesmanship. He believed that he had a special mission in the world and that he and his followers could best accomplish the ends in view apart from those things.

Again Francis was consistent. He did not preach cream and live skim milk; but his life was the sweetest, purest sermon he ever preached. He was no hypocrite. He did not command his followers to go; it was 'come, follow me.' No request would he make of them of which he was not willing first to set the example.

He was bold and earnest. Nothing was done by halves. A conviction of duty was always put into execution at once. He had such an exalted idea of the importance of his mission that he stopped at nothing short of entire accomplishment.

He was also a really great preacher. He preached neither subtleties nor dogmas. He preached the Gospel of Christ in such a clear, loving way that he frightened the church. He avoided polemics. He had no quarrel with the clergy as such and was always obedient to them. He shunned scholasticism and clung to the essential verities of the Bible. He was not a heretic hunter nor a heretic fighter. The sword he wielded, was the 'sword of the spirit' and a most effective weapon it was in his hand.

It must also be said that Francis was a mystic, in the best sense of that term. He loved nature. God talked with him through the rippling streams, the gentle rain, the mountain torrent, the fertile fields and the impressive mountain. The lightning was the gleam of God's eye and the thunder was his voice.

Every beast and bird spoke a language which he understood. He would stand or sit in some wooded retreat for hours and talk to his feathered friends and call them brother birds and sister birds. All nature was akin to him for he was a creature of nature's Creator. He believed that he could and did commune with God face to face. He knew that it was Jesus who spoke to him at St. Damian and afterwards at the Portiuncula. At times his pent up soul burst forth and sounded to the world his ecstatic raptures. He was a poet of no mean ability. Once at St. Damian, after one of his soul refreshing conferences with St. Clara, he was silent for some time and then burst forth with his "Canticle of the Sun" which has been pronounced the most perfect utterance of modern religious sentiment by a no less able critic than Ernest Renan.

It is universally conceded that he saved the church in Italy from being overrun by the heresy of the Cathari. He also averted other impending disasters. Had the papacy been content to allow the order to practice the pure ideals of Francis; the church would have escaped many troubles in after years.

It is true that Francis held to many of the doctrines of the Roman church which we consider abhorrent. For instance he believed in the 'real presence.' But Francis was not a theologian. He accepted the theology of the church as he found it. He knew no other. The part he played was to put into practical application the living truths of the gospel and to demonstrate to the world their reality. Only the opened books of the judgement day will reveal all that he accomplished for God and the world. In all things Christ was first, the church second.

Taking him all in all he seems to me to be the most worthy of the title of Saint of all those whom the Roman church has

canonized since the Apostolic days.



BX 47
.F6K5

BX
4700
.F6K5

Kinney
St. F
His

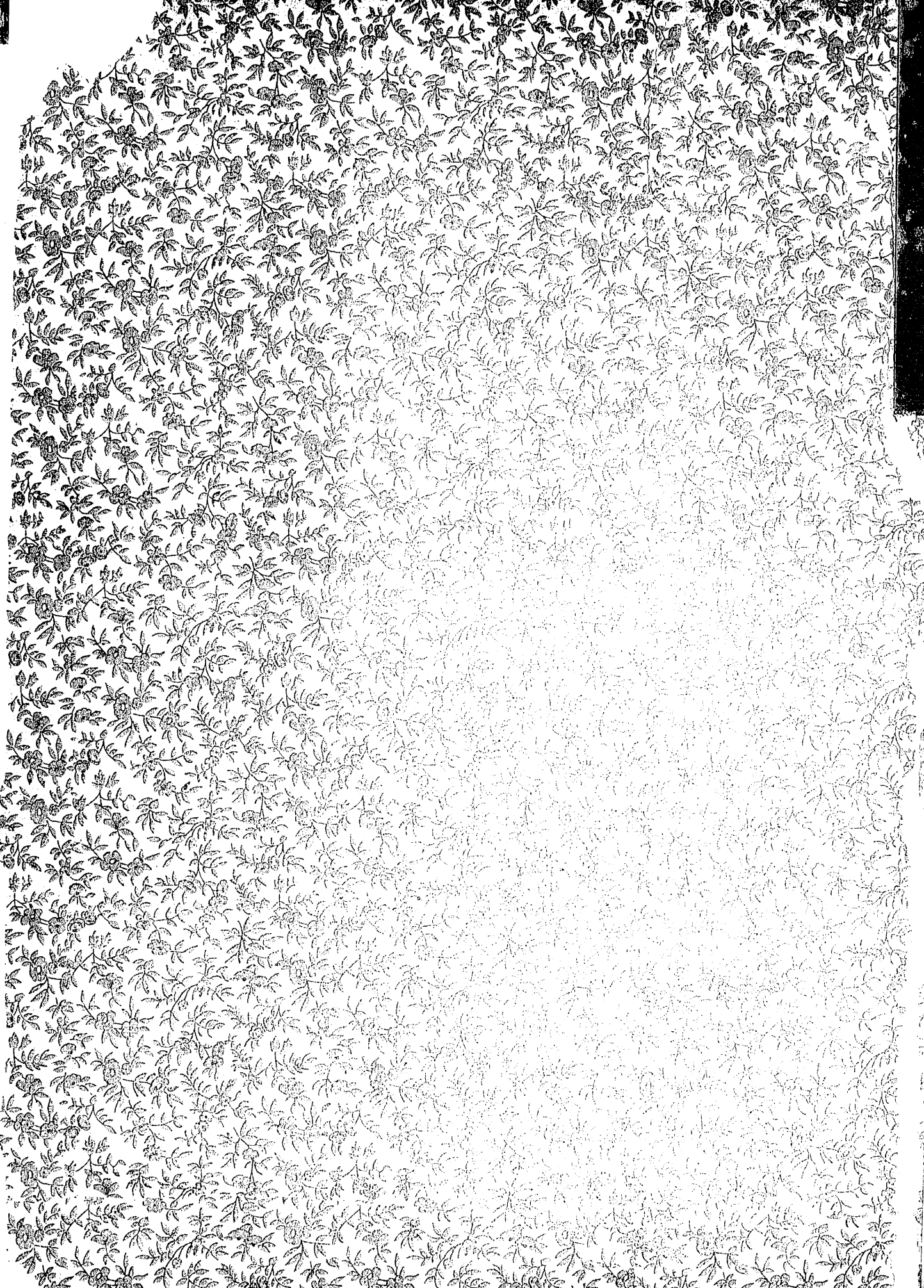
Feb 22 1904
Feb 22 1904
Apr 14 1904
FEB 16 1904
Sre
Barlow
Hoh



3X4700 103473
F6K5 SWIFT HALL LIBRARY

Kinney, Edwin Bruce
St. Francis of Assisi;
His Life and Times
103473

Brenda ~~Mar 3 '60~~
Barbara McKays
16 Robert Skint



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



20 060 342

BX4700

103473

.F6K5 SWIFT HALL LIBRARY

EX
4700
.F6K5

Kinney, Edwin Bruce
St. Francis of Assisi;
His Life and Times

103473

Oct 24 '60 Brenda Seck

Barbara McKay
FEB 19 '60 Robert Seck